

Claims:

1. A preventive and/or therapeutic agent for vasculitis, said agent comprising an interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist as an active ingredient.

5        2. A preventive and/or therapeutic agent, for vasculitis having resistance to steroids and/or immunosuppressants, said agent comprising an interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist as an active ingredient.

10       3. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said vasculitis is polyarteritis nodosa.

4. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said vasculitis is the aortitis syndrome.

15       5. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said vasculitis is vasculitis associated with immunological abnormalities.

20       6. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein said IL-6 antagonist is an antibody against IL-6 receptor.

7. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 6 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against IL-6 receptor.

25       8. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 6 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor.

30       9. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 6 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor.

10. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to any one of claims 6 to 9 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a recombinant antibody.

35       11. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 8 wherein said monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor is PM-1 antibody.

12. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 9 wherein said monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor is MR16-1 antibody.

5 13. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to any one of claims 6 to 12 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a chimeric antibody, a humanized antibody, or a human antibody against IL-6 receptor.

10 14. The preventive and/or therapeutic agent according to claim 13 wherein said humanized antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor is humanized PM-1 antibody.

15 15. The use of interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist for the manufacture of a preventive and/or therapeutic agent for vasculitis.

16 16. The use of interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist for the manufacture of a preventive and/or therapeutic agent for vasculitis having resistance to steroids and/or immunosuppressants.

20 17. The use according to claim 15 or 16 wherein said vasculitis is polyarteritis nodosa.

18. The use according to claim 15 or 16 wherein said vasculitis is the aortitis syndrome.

25 19. The use according to claim 15 or 16 wherein said vasculitis is vasculitis associated with immunological abnormalities.

20. The use according to any of claims 15 to 19 wherein said IL-6 antagonist is an antibody against IL-6 receptor.

30 21. The use according to claim 20 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against IL-6 receptor.

22. The use according to claim 20 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor.

35 23. The use according to claim 20 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor.

24. The use according to any of claims 20 to 23 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a recombinant antibody.

5 25. The use according to claim 22 wherein said monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor is PM-1 antibody.

26. The use according to claim 23 wherein said monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor is MR16-1 antibody.

10 27. The use according to any of claim 20 to 26 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a chimeric antibody, a humanized antibody, or a human antibody.

15 28. The use according to claim 27 wherein said humanized antibody against IL-6 receptor is a humanized PM-1 antibody.

29. A method of preventing and/or treating vasculitis comprising administering an interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist to a subject in need thereof.

20 30. A method of preventing and/or treating vasculitis having resistance to steroids and/or immunosuppressants, comprising administering an interleukin-6 (IL-6) antagonist to a subject in need thereof.

25 31. The method according to claim 29 or 30 wherein said vasculitis is polyarteritis nodosa.

32. The method according to claim 29 or 30 wherein said vasculitis is the aortitis syndrome.

30 33. The method according to claim 29 or 30 wherein said vasculitis is vasculitis associated with immunological abnormalities.

34. The method according to any of claims 29 to 33 wherein said IL-6 antagonist is an antibody against IL-6 receptor.

35 35. The method according to claim 34 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against IL-6 receptor.

36. The method according to claim 34 wherein said

antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor.

37. The method according to claim 34 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor.

38. The method according to any of claims 34 to 37 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a recombinant antibody.

39. The method according to claim 36 wherein said monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor is PM-1 antibody.

40. The method according to claim 37 wherein said monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor is MR1 antibody.

41. The method according to any of claims 34 to 40 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a chimeric antibody, humanized antibody, or a human antibody against IL-6 receptor.

42. The method according to claim 41 wherein said humanized antibody against IL-6 receptor is a humanized PM-1 antibody.